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LETTER DATED 24 AUGUST 1997 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a letter dated 21 August 1997 addressed to you by Mr. Mohammed Said Al-Sahaf, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq, calling attention to the fact that Turkish military operations in northern Iraq are continuing to violate Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity and urging the United Nations to meet its responsibilities as laid down in the Charter and halt the intimidation and aggression to which Iraq is constantly being subjected.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Saeed H. HASAN
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex

Letter dated 21 August 1997 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq addressed to the Secretary-General

With reference to the letter dated 14 July 1997 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Turkey addressed to you (S/1997/552, annex), I should like to point out that while it states that Turkey's "policy is based ... on respect for the independence, sovereignty, political unity and territorial integrity of Iraq", what is actually taking place is totally inconsistent with the tenor of the letter. The Turkish armed attacks on Iraq's territory and people in the country's northern governorates are continuing on the pretext of clearing the area of the presence established by the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK), which has "constituted a major security threat to the local population".

Despite Turkish official statements to the effect that the incursion carried out by the Turkish armed forces was limited in scope and duration and that the forces in question, as the letter also states, began their withdrawal from northern Iraq on 20 June 1997, the statement made by an official spokesman for the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 23 June 1997 indicated that "the withdrawal of these forces depends on their success in achieving their objectives". With this statement, Turkey thus accords itself the right and the authority to determine a date on which to halt its military operations whenever it so wishes, in accordance with its own assessments and without regard for the obligations that are incumbent upon it under international law and the Charter of the United Nations and that require it to refrain from engaging in any actions that constitute an encroachment on the security and sovereignty of other States. No one knows when Turkey will decide that such success has been achieved, inasmuch as Turkish military operations are still under way in northern Iraq, violating Iraq's sovereignty, posing a threat to its security and territorial integrity and creating further innocent civilian victims.

The forces in question carried out 19 military operations between 20 June (the date withdrawal was announced) and 12 August 1997. This clearly demonstrates that Turkey is persisting in its attacks on Iraq's territory and in threatening the safety and security of Iraq's people.

The violations committed by Turkey are clearly in breach of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations as enshrined in the 1970 Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, which was adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 2625 (XXV).

What the Turkish Government is doing cannot contribute to ensuring peace and stability in the area, as the Minister claims is the case in his letter. It rather represents yet another threat to the security and safety of the people of Iraq to be added to those resulting from the anomalous situation created by the United States of America and its coalition partners in using Turkish territory and Turkish military bases to intimidate Iraq with the approval of the Turkish Government.

By virtue of their being neighbours, the relationship between Iraq and Turkey is based on deeply rooted historical, cultural and human ties. The attacks by the Turkish armed forces on the people of Iraq, the repeated bombardment of Iraqi towns and villages and the violation of Iraq's sovereignty, territorial integrity and airspace undermine these foundations, are incompatible with the principles of good neighbourliness and the 1926 Iraq-Turkey boundary agreement and represent a further element jeopardizing peace and security in the region.

As I have said in my previous letters, the Turkish Government bears full international responsibility for the acts of aggression it commits inside Iraqi territory and for all their consequences, regardless of the alleged reasons it gives.

The Government of Iraq reserves its legitimate right under international law to determine an appropriate response to this brutal military aggression and to seek compensation for the damage caused by these Turkish violations of Iraq's territory and airspace and for the human suffering inflicted on Iraqi citizens by these repeated acts of aggression.

At the same time, the Government of the Republic of Iraq renews its call to the Government of Turkey to reconsider its dangerous policy, which clearly contributes to perpetuating the anomalous situation in northern Iraq in cooperation with the Governments of the United States of America and the United Kingdom, of implementing a dangerous scheme for interference in the internal affairs of Iraq.

As, through you, I reiterate my country's call to Turkey to respect Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity, I express the hope that the United Nations will meet its responsibilities as laid down in the Charter and that it will halt the intimidation and aggression to which my country is constantly being subjected.

I transmit to you herewith an enclosure giving information on Turkish attacks on Iraq's territory and people between 4 June and 12 August 1997.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mohammed Said AL-SAHAF
Minister for Foreign Affairs
of the Republic of Iraq

Enclosure

Turkish attacks on Iraqi territory, 4 June-12 August 1997

1. Between 0745 and 1145 hours on 4 June 1997 Turkish fighter aircraft violated the airspace of the Republic of Iraq with 10 sorties. The violations were centred on the Zakho, Amadiyah and Baibo areas.

2. Between 1023 and 1630 hours on 5 June 1997 Turkish fighter aircraft violated the airspace of the Republic of Iraq with four sorties. The violations were centred on the Baibo and Baibo North areas.

3. Between 1318 and 1403 hours on 6 June 1997 Turkish fighter aircraft violated the airspace of the Republic of Iraq with one sortie. The violations were centred on the Amadiyah and Baibo areas.

4. Between 0825 and 0845 hours on 7 June 1997 Turkish fighter aircraft violated the airspace of the Republic of Iraq with two sorties. The violations were centred on the Baibo and Amadiyah areas.

5. On 8 June 1997 Turkish fighter aircraft violated the airspace of the Republic of Iraq with six sorties. The violations were centred on the Amadiyah, Baibo, Zakho, Rawanduz and Aqrah areas.

6. On 9 June 1997 Turkish fighter aircraft violated the airspace of the Republic of Iraq with four sorties. The violations were centred on the Amadiyah, Baibo, Zakho, Rawanduz and Aqrah areas.

7. Between 0815 and 1220 hours on 10 June 1997 Turkish fighter aircraft violated the airspace of the Republic of Iraq with eight sorties. The violations were centred on the Baibo, Aqrah, Amadiyah, Koysanjaq and Rawanduz areas.

8. On 12 June 1997 Turkish fighter aircraft violated the airspace of the Republic of Iraq with eight sorties. The violations were centred on the Amadiyah, Rawanduz, Dukan, Dohuk, Irbil, Aqrah, Zakho and Baibo areas.

9. On 13 June 1997 Turkish fighter aircraft violated the airspace of the Republic of Iraq with nine sorties. The violations were centred on the Amadiyah, Rawanduz, Dukan, Irbil, Aqrah, Zakho and Baibo areas.

10. Between 1310 and 1340 hours on 14 June 1997 Turkish fighter aircraft violated the airspace of the Republic of Iraq with two sorties. The violations were centred on the Baibo area.

11. Between 0805 and 0910 hours on 15 June 1997 Turkish fighter aircraft violated the airspace of the Republic of Iraq with four sorties. The violations were centred on the Amadiyah district.

12. Between 1910 and 1921 hours on 19 June 1997 Turkish fighter aircraft violated the airspace of the Republic of Iraq with 14 sorties. The violations were centred on the Baibo and Amadiyah areas.

13. Between 1055 and 1122 hours on 24 June 1997 Turkish fighter aircraft violated the airspace of the Republic of Iraq with one sortie. The violations were centred on the Zakho and Amadiyah areas.

14. Between 0937 and 1648 hours on 1 July 1997 Turkish fighter aircraft violated the airspace of the Republic of Iraq with five sorties. The violations were centred on the Baibo, Aqrah, Amadiyah and Zakho areas.

15. Between 1120 and 1823 hours on 2 July 1997 Turkish fighter aircraft violated the airspace of the Republic of Iraq with eight sorties. The violations were centred on the Baibo and Aqrah areas.

16. Between 0830 and 1900 hours on 3 July 1997 Turkish fighter aircraft violated the airspace of the Republic of Iraq with four sorties. The violations were centred on the Baibo and Baibo East areas.

17. Between 0915 and 0937 hours on 6 July 1997 Turkish fighter aircraft violated the airspace of the Republic of Iraq with two sorties. The violations were centred on the Baibo East area.

18. Between 1010 and 1040 hours on 12 July 1997 Turkish fighter aircraft violated the airspace of the Republic of Iraq with two sorties. The violations were centred on the Baibo area.

19. Between 1107 and 1152 hours on 20 July 1997 Turkish fighter aircraft violated the airspace of the Republic of Iraq with two sorties. The violations were centred on the Amadiyah area.

20. Between 0925 and 0955 hours on 21 July 1997 Turkish fighter aircraft violated the airspace of the Republic of Iraq with two sorties. The violations were centred on the Amadiyah area.

21. Between 0850 and 0955 hours on July 1997 Turkish fighter aircraft violated the airspace of the Republic of Iraq with four sorties. The violations were centred on the Baibo, Amadiyah, Batufah, Sharanish, Ayn Sifni, Aqrah and Irbil areas.

22. Between 1428 and 1445 hours on 24 July 1997 Turkish fighter aircraft violated the airspace of the Republic of Iraq with 10 sorties. The violations were centred on the Amadiyah, Rawanduz, Aqrah and Baibo East areas.

23. Between 1225 and 1350 hours on 28 July 1997 Turkish fighter aircraft violated the airspace of the Republic of Iraq with eight sorties. The violations were centred on the Zakho, Dohuk, Tall Kayf and Shaykhan areas.

24. Between 1204 and 1232 hours on 29 July 1997 Turkish fighter aircraft violated the airspace of the Republic of Iraq with four sorties. The violations were centred on the Amadiyah and Baibo areas.

25. Between 1600 and 1615 hours on 30 July 1997 Turkish fighter aircraft violated the airspace of the Republic of Iraq with two sorties. The violations were centred on the Zakho, Amadiyah, Aqrah, Tall Afar, Mosul and Sinjar areas.

26. Between 1155 and 1255 hours on 1 August 1997 Turkish fighter aircraft violated the airspace of the Republic of Iraq with four sorties. The violations were centred on the Zakho, Amadiyah, Rawanduz, Irbil North and Koysanjaq North areas.

27. Between 0925 and 0937 hours on August 1997 Turkish fighter aircraft violated the airspace of the Republic of Iraq with two sorties. The violations were centred on the Amadiyah and Baibo areas.

28. Between 1430 and 1523 hours on 4 August 1997 Turkish fighter aircraft violated the airspace of the Republic of Iraq with six sorties. The violations were centred on the Zakho, Amadiyah, Baibo, Irbil, Rawanduz, Dukan, Aqrah and Batufah areas.

29. Between 1225 and 1325 hours on 5 August 1997 Turkish fighter aircraft violated the airspace of the Republic of Iraq with two sorties. The violations were centred on the Rawanduz, Dukan, Amadiyah and Baibo areas.

30. Between 1120 and 1859 hours on 11 August 1997 Turkish fighter aircraft violated the airspace of the Republic of Iraq with five sorties. The violations were centred on the Amadiyah and Baibo areas.

31. Between 1300 and 1320 hours on 12 August 1997 Turkish fighter aircraft violated the airspace of the Republic of Iraq with two sorties. The violations were centred on the Zakho, Amadiyah and Baibo areas.